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more brought into use. The government should take steps to survey the possibilities for small projects and to provide assistance in carrying them out, thus giving aid and security to the farm population of the North which now feels that its needs have been neglected and overlooked.

In general, however, the North will have to remain dependent on rain-fall to sustain its agriculture. There are apparently still considerable rain-fed areas which can be settled and put to the plow. Particular care should be exercised, however, to insure that the areas are not sub-marginal from the standpoint of either rainfall or fertility and that settlers are really available in the North, which is generally more sparsely settled than the central and southern portions of Iraq. For example, the Mission believes that the prospect of scanty and uncertain rainfall will probably make it undesirable to proceed, except on a very restricted, experimental basis, with the settlement scheme near Balad Sinjar in Mosul province which has been projected by the Agriculture Department.

Settlement of New Land

In the past much of the vacant land available for an expansion of crop production which ostensibly belonged to the state has fallen into the hands of big landowners. The so-called Land Settlement Law of 1932, which inaugurated a cadastral survey for the purpose of settling the past confusion regarding land titles and systems of tenure, facilitated this process. It permitted the land settlement committees appointed to administer the law to grant titles (so-called *lazmah* grants) to people who could demonstrate that they had made productive use of land within the previous fifteen years. In practice, it has been possible to obtain title on the presentation of proof that a crop was produced on the land in one year, and the land settlement committees have occasionally accepted even more tenuous proof of cultivation. In this way many sheikhs and other influential persons have managed to obtain title to large tracts of land without any payment whatsoever. Since the cadastral survey is only about half completed, more land may be preempted in this way unless a limit is set on such acquisitions.

Land definitely adjudged to be state (*miri sirf*) property by the land settlement committees has, however, been set aside for

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425 distribution to selected settlers under the terms of a law passed by
421 Parliament in the spring of 1951. This law reflects a growing
166 realization that a class of independent small-holders needs to be created. Settlement areas ranging in size from 2,000 donums in the mountains to 20,000 donums in flow-irrigated land and 80,000 donums in the dry-farming zone are to be established. Units up to 20 donums in mountainous land, 100 donums in flow-irrigated lands, 200 donums in lands irrigated by low-lift pumps and 400 donums in dry-farming lands are to be distributed among farmers, with preference to be accorded to those living in or near the settlement areas. Up to 20 percent of each area may also be allotted to graduates of agricultural schools and former members of the police and army, and up to 25 percent to civil pensioners and unemployed school graduates, provided that the committee responsible for the administration of the whole scheme is convinced of their agricultural capabilities. Settlers will be given the opportunity to participate in the work of preparing each area for settlement. The committee will plan the whole settlement, including the sites of houses and public buildings which are to be constructed in accordance with its specifications. The committee will also issue instructions regarding the type and method of cultivation. After ten years farmers who have made good will be granted title to their land without charge, and for a further period of ten years they will not be permitted to alienate their land in any way or to mortgage it except to the state Agricultural Bank. The only exception to this kind of distribution and settlement will be made in the case of state lands which can be irrigated only by high-lift pumps. Such lands may still be leased in tracts up to a maximum of 5,000 donums to a single individual.

425 This law, properly administered, will undoubtedly result in
421 great benefit to Iraq. The Mission urges, however, that the government insist on the principle that settlers farm their land themselves without resort to sharecroppers. Otherwise there is a danger that a considerable number of minor landlords will be created, thus defeating the fundamental purpose of the scheme. This principle may be jeopardized both by the selection of non-farmers as beneficiaries and by the contemplated allotment of excessively large

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plots to single individuals in the pump-irrigated and dry-farming areas.

While sympathizing with the desire to provide in some way for unemployed school graduates and retired civil servants, army and police personnel, the Mission believes there is serious danger that these types of beneficiaries will tend to become landlords who will entrust the farming of their plots to others. The success of the settlement schemes may easily be endangered if the land falls into the hands of absentee landlords or of people with little or no farming experience. In any event there are many farmers in relatively overcrowded rural areas with better claims to the new land.

The proposed allotments, particularly in the dry-farming and pump-irrigated areas, may well be too large unless there is assurance that the farmers will have access to adequate machinery to till their land. The relatively large allotment in pump-irrigated lands as well as the exemption of lands irrigated by high-lift pumps from distribution to small-holders appear to be based on the assumption that only larger landholders can afford the necessary investment in pumps. In the past when capital was scarce, the installation of pumps was left to merchants and landowners who consequently were able to reap high returns in the form of a large proportion of the resulting agricultural output. Now that the government is assured of ample financial means in the future, it might consider financing the construction of pumping stations and providing pumps at cost to groups of settlers organized into cooperatives which would undertake to operate the pumps and gradually repay the government. Under such conditions the justification for larger allotments of pump-irrigated lands would tend to disappear. The Mission therefore suggests that the government review the size of the allocation to each farmer and that it reserve to itself the right to reassign a portion of the allotment if one farmer should prove incapable of cultivating it.

The Mission also makes two other recommendations. The first is that the right of sale after the initial period of 20 years be limited in such a way as to give the government an option to purchase for the purpose of preventing the land from falling into the hands of absentee landlords. The second is that the provision enabling settlers to acquire their land without cost be reconsidered.

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The Mission believes that the settlers should, as a matter of general principle, be required to make some payment for the extensive benefits received. This is all the more necessary in order not to widen unduly the disparity between the economic status of the favored settlers and that of the great majority of cultivators who will continue to work under much less favorable conditions. Such payments need not be excessively burdensome, since they could be spread over a number of years.

The new law will apply on a broad scale the basic principles of the Dujaila land settlement scheme in south-central Iraq. In the period 1946 to 1950, 1,058 farmers were settled there on 100-donum plots allotted from state-owned irrigated land. The Mission was impressed by the results achieved through this scheme. The farmers, who used to be sharecroppers, are conscious of their new-won independence and dignity. By comparison with the fellahin in neighboring areas they appear prosperous and content. Many of them are members of a cooperative—the only one of its kind in Iraq—which owns 10 tractors, two lorries, a flour mill and a club-house. Although the accounts of this cooperative leave much to be desired, its operations are generally along sound lines and indicative of what can be accomplished through state-assisted self-help. The Dujaila scheme is, however, not without defects. Its success as an agricultural venture is jeopardized by the progressive salination of the land because of failure to provide drainage facilities —an omission which should be promptly remedied. The administrative staff appears to be excessively large. Small-scale "landlordism" has crept in, since some farmers have brought in others to do a large part of their work on a sharecropping basis. The farmers were settled in a scattered fashion without regard to the need for community life. Most important, aside from insisting on small fruit gardens, the committee in charge of the project has effected no improvement in farming methods. The Department of Agriculture is not even represented on the committee, and there are no agricultural experts in the project capable of assisting farmers in raising their standards of cultivation. The improved economic position of the cultivators in the Dujaila scheme is almost wholly due to the fact that the farmer there has a larger plot of land and does not need to surrender a share of his output to a landlord. In the